

220 individuals are being held as political prisoners by the communist regime in Cuba. For the dissidents suffering prison terms, and for their families and loved ones, their suffering is real. And it is our duty as a free nation to let them know that we remember them, that they are not forgotten, and that their suffering is for a purpose. They must know that the world is watching and that we will not rest and will not tire and will keep working to support them until they are finally free.

I am reminded of the story that Natan Sharansky tells about his time in the Soviet gulag, when word came that President Reagan had called the Soviet Union an "Evil Empire." For the political prisoners, it was the first sign that they had not been forgotten. It was a signal to them that the leader of the world's most powerful democracy had no illusions about the true nature of that regime, that he knew of their plight and was ready to call the Soviet system what it was—evil.

This resolution sends a signal to all the dissidents and political prisoners in Cuba that we have no illusions about the nature of Castro's brother's brutal regime and that we know of their plight and stand ready to help them.

I truly believe there is hope. We are witnessing a remarkable time in history as freedom prevails in places that were once rife with oppression. As former Czech Republic President Václav Havel once said, "without free, self-respecting, and autonomous citizens there can be no free and independent nations." It is now time for the world to voice its support of the Cuban people so they too can rise above the injustice of the communist regime and finally achieve the freedom and independence of a democratic nation.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be

agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 573) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 573

Whereas the Cuban regime continues to deny the basic human rights of its citizens;

Whereas the Cuban people are denied freedom of the press, freedom of speech, and freedom to peaceful assembly;

Whereas the Cuban regime refuses to hold free and fair elections in order to elect a democratic government that represents the will of the people;

Whereas Freedom House recently rated Cuba as 1 of the 8 most oppressive regimes in the world;

Whereas the Cuban regime is currently holding more than 220 political prisoners according to Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, and Reporters Without Borders;

Whereas these prisoners are illegally held in prison contrary to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which Cuba has signed and recognizes;

Whereas 55 of the 75 political activists imprisoned in the March 2003 crackdown (known as "Black Spring") including independent journalists and union members, remain in prison;

Whereas the wives of these prisoners, known as the Ladies in White, continue to be assaulted for simply seeking information regarding the March 2003 arrests, most recently on April 21, 2008, when the Ladies in White were violently dragged from a peaceful sit-in by Cuban officials;

Whereas prisoners face inhuman and unsafe prison conditions, including the denial of medical treatment; and

Whereas on May 21, 2008 communities around the world will celebrate Cuba Solidarity Day, a day for the world to join together in the fight against oppression in Cuba: Now therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) celebrates Cuba Solidarity Day;

(2) recognizes the injustices faced by the people of Cuba under the current regime; and

(3) stands in solidarity with the Cuban people as they continue to work towards democratic change in their homeland.

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, MAY 22, 2008

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it stand adjourned until 9:30 a.m. tomorrow, May 22; that following the prayer and the pledge, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the morning hour be deemed expired, the time for the two leaders be reserved, and the Senate resume consideration of the House message to accompany H.R. 2641, the supplemental appropriations bill, as under the previous order.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

PROGRAM

Mr. REID. Mr. President, under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to a series of up to four rollcall votes beginning shortly after 11:30 a.m. tomorrow. I am sorry to everyone involved that we didn't have this finalized earlier, but we were unable to do it any sooner.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 9:30 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 9:29 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, May 22, 2008, at 9:30 a.m.